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SOLIDAGO CONFERTA MILLER.

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GREATEST of gardeners was, I believe, Philip Miller. Born in 1691, he died on December 18, 1771. During his long life, he was at the head of his fraternity in Europe, and was responsible for the introduction of a vast number of species of plants into European gardens.

His best known work was his excellent *Gardeners Dictionary*. This was a folio work which first appeared in 1731. It went through eight editions during Miller's life time, the last of which appeared in 1768. There was also a ninth edition by Thomas Martyn, which appeared after Miller's death. Miller also issued the *Gardeners Dictionary Abridged*. This passed through six editions, the last of which appeared in 1771, the year of Miller's death.

His most ambitious work was called "Figures of the most beautiful, useful and uncommon plants described in the *Gardeners Dictionary*." This was first issued in parts, each of which contained six colored illustrations of plants. (There was also an uncolored edition.) The first number was issued March 25, 1755, and one was issued regularly every month thereafter. So on March 31, 1759, we find Miller announcing that he had published forty-seven numbers up to that time, and had the material ready for three more parts to complete the work. These numbers were issued at five shillings each. In 1760 he issued the work as a whole. The completed work is a fine folio and contains 300 plates; and the fact that it was sold when issued for twelve guineas shows how much interest in flowers existed at that time in Great Britain, especially when one bears in mind how very much greater the purchasing power of a guinea was then than it is now.

Miller's works were published not only in English, but also in French, German and Dutch. They were all very noticeable for the great care displayed by him in the selection of the best kind of type, the best kind of paper, and the best kind of binding. The result is that copies now offered for sale are usually in excellent condition. They will undoubtedly continue to exist and give good service for many centuries after more modern works in which less attention has been given to such matters will have become useless.

In his earlier works, Miller used the old polynomial system for naming plants, but in the 1768 edition (the 8th) of his *Gardeners Dictionary* and in the 1771 edition (the 6th) of his *Gardeners Dictionary Abridged*, he adopted the Linnaean binomial system. A very considerable number of new names especially of American plants, were so published by him. Curiously, many of these names have been neglected, although his descriptions were usually full for that period; while, on the other hand, later names from that most miserable production, Aiton's *Hortus Kewensis*, seem to have invariably been carefully investigated.

Among the very interesting descriptions given by Miller is that of his *Solidago* No. 27 in the eighth edition of his *Gardeners Dictionary* in 1768. This, named by him *Solidago conferta*, was described by him as follows:

"27. *Solidago* (*conferta*) caule paniculato racemis inferioribus simplicibus, summis confertissimis, foliis glabris integerrimis. Woundwort with a paniculated stalk, the lower spikes simple, those at the top in very close clusters and entire smooth leaves."

"The twenty-seventh sort grows naturally at Philadelphia; the lower leaves are spear-shaped, oblique, smooth, and entire, standing upon long footstalks. The stalks rise from three to four feet high; the spikes of flowers which come out from the wings of the stalks are long, blunt, and a little recurved at the end; those on the upper part of the stalk are erect, and clustered together in a close spike; they are yellow, and appear in September."

This species has been neglected because Miller failed to refer back to his finely illustrated work above referred to—"Figures of . . . plants described in the *Gardeners Dictionary*." In that work he did not use the binomial system, but there fully described (p. 170) under the same polynomial as in his later work and with practically identical description, is to be found the same species. There too is given the further

information: "This sort grows naturally at Philadelphia, from whence the seeds were sent me by Dr. BenseL." But in addition to this, his beautiful colored plate 254, fig. 2, one of the few colored plates of *Solidago* ever published, makes the identification of his species very certain.

Solidago conferta Miller is the species which many years later was called *Solidago speciosa* by Nuttall, and we must adopt the appropriate name of Miller instead of Nuttall's excellent name.

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ON ERAGROSTIS PEREGRINA AND ITS RELATIVES.

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THE publication of *Eragrostis peregrina* Wiegand as a new species¹ and a local collection of this species at about the same time both served to awaken interest in a group of weed species that previously had received scant attention excepting for a mild inquiry concerning the proper identity of *Eragrostis caroliniana* (Spreng.) Scribn. and *Eragrostis pilosa* (L.) Beauv. With the full intention of making some note of the occurrence of *E. peregrina* in the local region, it was planned to give especial attention in connection with regular field work to the collection and observation of this and related species of the group but this field program was very nearly abandoned because from the very first *E. peregrina* was found to be of very frequent local occurrence. However, the apparent scarcity of material in herbaria as published by Professor Wiegand led to a renewal of interest with the result that many collections and observations were made in the years from 1918 to 1921. The intention of offering some note of this at the time was not realized but it is believed that a summary of the results of these collections and observations in the local region together with those of subsequent years may be of some value and interest and they are here briefly offered.

The first local collection of *E. peregrina* was made along a railroad but it was soon learned that, although of general occurrence and an expected species about railroad stations as well as along railroad property away from them, the plant was apparently not at all definitely related

¹ A new species of *Eragrostis* of the Old World and North America. K. M. Wiegand. *RHODORA*, Vol. 19, June 1917, No. 222, Pp. 93-96.